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For Immediate Release
2008AE0023-000635
April 26, 2008

Ministry of Advanced Education

B.C. INVESTS $4M FOR CANCER RESEARCH CHAIR AT UBC

VANCOUVER – The Province is providing $4 million to the Canadian Cancer Society to endow a research chair at the University of British Columbia in the primary prevention of cancer, Advanced Education Minister Murray Coell announced today.

The chair will be held by Carolyn Cook Gotay, who has a PhD in social psychology and has had a long, distinguished career in cancer prevention and control. Building on her leadership experience in community liaison and outreach, Gotay will initiate and supervise cancer prevention studies in B.C.

"By attracting top researchers like Carolyn Cook Gotay, a body of work will be developed in British Columbia that can only improve the quality of life in our province," said Coell. "We can be justifiably proud of how B.C. is supporting leading edge research in the province."

The Canadian Cancer Society Chair in Cancer Primary Prevention at the University of British Columbia will help develop a national cancer prevention strategy by researching the links between diet, exercise, body weight, stress and environmental carcinogens to specific types of cancer. This chair is unique in North America and internationally due to its primary prevention focus.

"Today's announcement will build on the many research successes we have seen in recent years regarding cancer treatment," said Gotay. "I want to thank the provincial government and our other partners for their important commitment to improving the health of patients and families in British Columbia and across Canada."

In B.C. in 2008, there will be an estimated 20,500 new cases of cancer and 9,200 deaths. This is 100 fewer new cases and 200 more deaths than 2007, but nationwide the number of new cancer cases and deaths continues to rise steadily as the Canadian population ages.

"Today's announcement is another example of research excellence at the University of British Columbia," said UBC president Stephen Toope. "I want to congratulate Dr. Gotay on her accomplishment and recognize the provincial government's ongoing support for health research at UBC."

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The Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation has also committed to provide an additional $750,000 towards the chair, together with support from Canadian Cancer Society donors. The Province has invested more than one-and-a-half billion dollars in research and innovation since 2001, including significant investments in research to improve treatments and seek cures for major health-care challenges such as cancer, depression and spinal cord injuries.

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